

progress of the human mind, should reject his religion. These I have placed out of the question, as it is not my object to show the injuries done to Christianity by its avowed enemies. But it might have been expected, that all the intelligent men, from that hour to the end of time, who should really admit the truth of this religion, would perceive the sovereignty and universality of its claims, feel that everything unconsonant with it ought instantly to vanish from the whole system of approved sentiments and the whole school of literature, and to keep as clearly aloof as the Israelites from the boundary that guarded the sanctity of Mount Sinai. It might have been presumed, that all principles which the new dispensation rendered obsolete, or declared or implied to be wrong, should no more be regarded as belonging to the system of principles to be henceforward received and taught, than dead bodies in their graves belong to the race of living men. To retain or recall them would therefore be as offensive to the judgment, as to take up these bodies and place them in the paths of men would be offensive to the senses ; and as absurd as the practice of the ancient Egyptians, who made their embalmed ancestors their companions at their festivals. It might have been supposed, that whatever Christianity had actually substituted, abolished, or supplied, would therefore be *practically* regarded by these believers of it as substituted, abolished, or supplied; and that they would, in all their writings, be at least as careful of their fidelity in this great article, as an adherent to the Newtonian philosophy would be certain to exclude, from his scientific discourse, all notions that seriously implied the Ptolemaic or the Tychonic system to be true. Necessarily, a number of these literary believers would write on subjects so completely foreign to what comes within the cognizance of Christianity, that a pure neutrality, which should avoid all interference with it, would be all that could be claimed from them in its behalf: though at the same time, one should feel some degree of regret, to see a man of enlarged mind exhausting his ability and his life on these foreign subjects, without devoting some short interval to the service of that which he believes to be of far surpassing moment.*

* X could not help feeling a degree of this regret in reading lately the memoirs of the admirable and estimable Sir William Jones. Some of his researches in Asia have incidentally served the cause of religion • bvt